GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:115
ANSWERED ON:21.07.2015
National Forest Policy
Hansdak Shri Vijay Kumar;Singh Deo Shri Kalikesh Narayan

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a)whether the National Forest Policy envisages a goal of forest and tree cover over one third of the geographical area of the country;
(b)if so, the steps taken by the Government in the last decade to achieve the above goal and the percentage increase in forest and tree cover during this period;
(c)whether the pace of increase in forest and tree cover is very slow; and
(d)if so, the additional steps the Government is taking to accelerate the pace and the time-frame fixed therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a)to (d)Yes Sir. The National Forest Policy, 1988 provides for having a minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest and tree cover. As per India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2003, total forest and tree cover of the country was 23.68 percent of the total geographical area, which has increased to 24.01 percent according to the latest ISFR 2013.

Afforestation in the country is taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme (NAP), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Integrated Watershed Management Programme, National Bamboo Mission and under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority, 13th Finance Commission Grant, different State Plan/ Non- Plan Schemes including externally aided projects. National Afforestation Programme of the Ministry of Environment ,Forest and Climate Change is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Afforestation and tree plantation and eco-restoration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in the country. The Scheme is being implemented through a decentralized mechanism of State Forest Development Agency at State level, Forest Development Agency at Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees at Village levels. An amount of Rs.2500 crores has been approved for NAP in the 12th Five Year Plan.

There is no time limit fixed for achieving the goal envisaged under National Forest Policy. However, in addition to the existing efforts, the recently launched Green India Mission (GIM) aims at both increasing the forest & tree cover by 5 million hectare (mha), as well as increasing the quality of the existing forest cover in another 5 mha. The Ministry has released to the tune of Rs.4994.55 lakhs and 1265.50 lakhs to the states in the financial year 2012-13 and 2013-14 for preparatory activities for implementation of Green India Mission. The activities undertaken by the State Governments under preparatory phase include institutional strengthening, training, identification of landscapes and preparation of Perspective Plan for implementation of GIM.

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